

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. DEFAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Ms. PELOSI] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. PELOSI addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. PASTOR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. PASTOR addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Ms. MCKINNEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. MCKINNEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mrs. MEEK] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. MEEK of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

□ 2230

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Dakota [Mr. POMEROY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I am not much of a statistician, but when we are talking about children and nutrition, this is what I think it is all about. The opening statement of the National School Lunch Act of 1946 includes the words, "It is hereby declared as a matter of national security to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children to provide for the establishment of nonprofit school lunch programs."

Even in 1946, our Nation realized there was a significant need to invest in the health and diets of its citizens, most particularly its kids.

Since the implementation of the National School Lunch Act and the Food Stamp Act, these and other food assistance programs have received broad support from the people of this country and the results are in. We have gotten our money's worth. Successful health outcomes have resulted. Growth stunting has decreased 65-percent. Low birth weight has plummeted. Iron deficiency anemia among preschoolers has been

dramatically reduced. These successes can be seen in the WIC program, the school lunch and breakfast programs, and the child and adult food care programs.

Now, some lawmakers in Washington want to significantly reduce the funds and fundamentally change the way we extend quality nutrition to kids and other deserving Americans. The proposal being debated that we have been discussing this evening would scrap several well-working nutrition programs, cut funding, and send the reduced amount back to the States. They call it block granting. I call it block-headed.

The designers of this program intend for these block grants to reduce the Federal spending on domestic food aid, give the States more power. States would be allowed to consolidate and target the programs.

I am all for State power and flexibility. I think that is a good idea. But if this block granted proposal becomes law, many nutrition programs that we now have will have to compete against one another for the reduced funds that would be available. Imagine being the State administrator, forced to pick between programs for seniors versus programs for infants, school age children versus day-care kids. These are all worthy nutrition recipients, competing for support that under the proposal would be dramatically below what we have extended presently and for the past several years.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture released numbers just Monday that indicated my State, North Dakota, would alone see a total reduction of \$53 million over the next 5 years. Now, this is a cut that goes far below any so-called bureaucratic or paperwork savings that they claim would result. This is taking meals from seniors, lunches from school children, milk from toddlers at day-care centers.

Certainly North Dakota under its block grant authority, like any other State, wants to do well by the nutrition for our citizens. I trust the State officials to look after that. But under this reduced funding level, cuts will be certain, meals will be withdrawn.

You know, at the age of 41 last year I became a father for the first time? I am now the parent of a 16-month-old beautiful little girl, and it has given me in particular an interest in what is available for day-care, because I know all over the country we got parents really worried about quality day-care and affordable day-care.

Last weekend I met about over a dozen parents and day-care providers in North Dakota, and they told me that the access they have to the child and adult food program, one of several, by the way, being eliminated under the block grant program, has been vitally important to them. They have written in fact across the State of North Dakota over 300 letters from day-care providers, and what they tell me says an

awful lot about how ill-advised these program changes are.

Let me quote to you from these letters. One woman who provides day-care writes,

The meals eaten at day-care are the healthiest meals some of our children have each day. I do not feel that the discretionary funding for children's nutrition programs will have a positive effect on our children. In fact, it may harm many. We would be in direct competition with other programs within our State that receive the funding.

A parent writes,

Without the food program to assist her, my day-care provider, as well as many others, will not be able to keep taking care of the children and still make enough money to make ends meet. She has considered raising her prices to help make up the cost of assistance if the program is no longer available. If she does raise her hourly wage, some families will not be able to afford to pay her the price she requests.

These and other testimonials from those most directly affected show that consolidation of the day-care feeding programs are a terrible idea, they will raise costs for parents, they will reduce the quality of nutrition for our kids, and they must be stopped.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota [Mr. JOHNSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

DON'T HURT THE CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. FIELDS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, today I had a very, very important visit from my district. I had a visit from a very, very young kid, whose name is Jonathan Edwards. He is a kindergarten student. He is 6-years of age. He walked into my office and he had some little red buttons, and he pinned a little red sticker on each member of my staff. He walked into my office and he indeed stuck one on me. And it indicated "Don't hurt the children." Don't hurt the kids.

I gave him a big hug and we talked about some of the things that were taking place in Baton Rouge, and we also talked about what is taking place here in Washington. He walked out of the office, Mr. Speaker, and I could not help but think about what is taking place right here in Washington, DC as this little kid tried to make some sense of what is taking place here in the midst of this debate.

I thought about Healthy Start, and I thought about the cut of \$10 million in a program that is so important to our young people. I thought about the WIC Program, \$25 million will be cut; 50 to 100 thousand expected mothers will be taken away from this program. I